



**For photos, interviews, etc. contact:**  
Terence Keane, Director of Public Relations  
510.647.2917, [tkeane@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:tkeane@berkeleyrep.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BERKELEY REP LAUNCHES A BOOK CLUB TO CELEBRATE *OLIVER TWIST***

**The first meeting of this free group focuses on *The Real Oliver Twist* by John Waller**

WHO: Local arts lovers join Literary Manager Madeleine Oldham  
WHAT: The Berkeley Rep Book Club  
WHERE: **Berkeley Rep's Roda Theatre** / 2015 Addison St @ Shattuck / Berkeley  
WHEN: **Tuesday, June 5 @ 6:00 PM**  
HOW MUCH: The book club is free (the usual ticket prices apply to see the play)  
INFO & RSVP: 510.647.2916 or [amansard@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:amansard@berkeleyrep.org)

MAY 23, 2007 – To celebrate the West Coast premiere of *Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist*, Berkeley Repertory Theatre is launching a book club. Led by the Theatre's literary manager, **Madeleine Oldham**, this new group will read titles associated with each show and meet at the Theatre for a friendly discussion. The book club is free – so attend once or come every time!

"Berkeley Rep's new book club is a fun way to meet people amidst meaningful discussion about art and society," Oldham explains. **"Here's how it works:** two months before each show, I'll announce the text we'll be reading. It could be fiction, it could be non-fiction... but it will always offer a unique perspective on our upcoming production. Read the book, join us for a pre-show discussion, and then see the play armed with new information that will help you better appreciate what you see on stage."

**The first meeting of the Berkeley Rep Book Club is at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, June 5.** The group meets in the Roda Theatre at 2015 Addison Street in downtown Berkeley. While the book club is free, participants are encouraged to purchase tickets for that night's performance. **Please RSVP** by calling 510.647.2916 or e-mailing [amansard@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:amansard@berkeleyrep.org).

This month's discussion will focus on ***The Real Oliver Twist* by John Waller**. Waller's articulate and engrossing book traces the life of Robert Blincoe, an orphan – like Dickens' famous hero – who rebelled after years of unrelenting and inhuman abuse. His body was broken by the Industrial Revolution, but his spirit could not be suppressed. Blincoe fought back against the mill owners, earning beatings but gaining self-respect. He joined the campaign to protect children, testified about unspeakable working conditions, and fought with extraordinary tenacity to keep his own children from the factories. From a parish workhouse to a sweatshop, from debtors' jail to Cambridge University, the true story of Blincoe's political, personal, and turbulent struggle illuminates the era as dramatically as Dickens.

The book is the perfect complement to Berkeley Rep's current production: inspired by the vivid world of the Victorian music hall, this new adaptation of ***Oliver Twist*** uses language from the novel to dramatize one of the most deeply felt stories ever written about childhood. Like the title character, the show has become a runaway success, leaving audiences in London, Boston, and New York clamoring for more. A cast of unforgettable characters brings the underworld of London to thrilling life – a 19<sup>th</sup>-century city teeming with danger and fear – all seen through the eyes of a bewildered child. By turns comic and tragic, musical and dramatic, this astonishing new *Twist* has stolen the hearts of critics and theatregoers on two continents. *Oliver Twist* runs through June 24. **For tickets**, contact the box office at 510.647.2949, 888.4BRTix (toll-free), or [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org).

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1997 tony award for outstanding regional theatre / a nonprofit corporation since 1968



**berkeley rep**

**Charles Dickens' OLIVER TWIST**

FACT SHEET

**WHO:** Adapted and directed by Neil Bartlett  
 Music by Gerard McBurney  
 Designed by Rae Smith (sets and costumes), Scott Zielinski (lights), and David Remedios (sound)  
 Featuring Remo Airdi, Steven Boyer, Gregory Derelian, Thomas Derrah, Ned Eisenberg, Carson Elrod, Jennifer Ikeda, Elizabeth Jasicki, Will LeBow, Karen MacDonald, Craig Pattison, Lucas Steele, and Michael Wartella

**WHAT:** *Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist* – a dark and delightful new adaptation of the classic novel

**WHERE:** Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Roda Theatre  
 2015 Addison Street @ Shattuck, Downtown Berkeley

**WHEN:** Through June 24

- Tuesdays & Fridays @ 8:00 PM
- Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM
- Thursdays & Saturdays @ 2:00 PM & 8:00 PM
- Sundays @ 2:00 PM & 7:00 PM
- No performance on Friday 6/22
- No matinee on 5/26, 5/31, 6/9, or 6/14

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
may 11–jun 24					may 11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
7pm ●		8pm ●	8pm ■	8pm	8pm ●	2/8pm ●
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
2/7pm		8pm	7pm	2/8pm	8pm	8pm
27	28	29	30	31	jun 1	2
2/7pm		8pm	7pm	8pm ◆	8pm	2/8pm
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2/7pm		8pm *	7pm	2/8pm	8pm	8pm
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2/7pm		8pm ◆	7pm	8pm	8pm ◆	2/8pm
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
2/7pm		8pm	7pm	2/8pm		2/8pm
24						
2/7pm						

- docent talks
- previews
- opening night
- ◆ discussion
- \* book club

**Special Events –**  
*Student matinee:* Wednesday 5/23 @ noon  
*Post-play discussions:* Thursday 5/31, Tuesday 6/12 & Friday 6/15 @ 8:00 PM  
**NEW!** - *Book club:* Tuesday 6/5 @ 6:00 PM  
*Docent presentations:* Tuesdays 5/29, 6/5, 6/12 & 6/19 @ 7:00 PM  
 & Thursdays 5/24, 5/31, 6/7, 6/14 & 6/21 @ 7:00 PM

**HOW MUCH:** Tues (8 PM) / Wednesdays (7 PM) .. \$45    Sundays (2 PM & 7 PM) ..... \$49  
 Thursdays (2 PM & 8 PM) ..... \$47    Friday evenings (8 PM) ..... \$55  
 Saturday matinees (2 PM) ..... \$47    Saturday evenings (8 PM) ..... \$61

**Discounts:**

- ½ price tickets available for those under 30 (some restrictions apply)
- ½ price rush tickets for students and seniors sold ½ hour before curtain
- 20 half-price HotTix go on sale Tuesday through Friday at noon
- Groups of 15+ may contact 510.647.2918 or groups@berkeleyrep.org

**TIX & INFO:** 510.647.2949 – toll-free 888-4-BRT-Tix – [www.berkeleyrep.org](http://www.berkeleyrep.org)